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**“THE EAGLE TO WATCH AND
THE HARP TO TUNE THE NATION”:
IRISH IMMIGRANTS, POLITICS AND
EARLY INDUSTRIALIZATION
IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY
1824-1836**

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The identification of artisan republicanism as an ideology of both workplace and political protest during the early and mid-nineteenth century has gained wide acceptance among historians over the past decade.¹ Most closely identified with native-born journeymen, this set of ideas guided the actions of shoemakers in Lynn, Massachusetts, carpenters in New York City, machine tool makers in Philadelphia and textile operatives in Lowell, Massachusetts. It provided the philosophical justification for their opposition to encroachments by new forms of workplace organization on long held concepts of right and privilege as well as perceived attempts to limit the political rights bequeathed them by their Revolutionary forefathers. While acknowledging the transatlantic roots of such concepts as liberty, equality and the rights of man, scholars have generally ignored the contributions of English and especially Irish immigrants to the evolution of working class republicanism in the United States.²

Most historians have depicted emigrants from Ireland as backward Catholic peasants devoid of any experience with urban, industrial society, prone to street rioting, drunkenness and crime. The lack of a coherent political ideology and inexperience with formal electoral politics allegedly rendered them unfit to actively participate in the building of a democratic republic rooted in an ideology of civic virtue, economic independence and personal liberty. The absence of a firm grounding in republican philosophical thought left immigrants prey to unscrupulous politicians who plied them with liquor and offered them municipal jobs in exchange for their political support.³ While some of these assumptions may hold true for the immigrants who flooded into the United States in the aftermath of the 1848 famine, they are definitely problematic for the actions of Irish immigrants in Paterson, New Jersey in the 1820's and 1830's.

The Catholic and Protestant Irishmen who settled in Paterson during the early 1800s bear little resemblance to the stereotypical immigrants of the famine era. Many of the farmers, artisans, handloom weavers and shopkeepers from the province of Ulster who arrived in the New Jersey town, as indicated by Chart 1, came with skills, resources and a point of view about what constituted the basic rights of man.

Chart 1.
Province of Origin
Irish Immigrants in Paterson, N.J. 1824-1836

<i>Province</i>	<i>Number of Immigrants</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Ulster	145	71.4
Leinster	40	19.7
Munster	14	6.9
Connacht	4	2.0
Total	203	100.0

NOTE: In addition to the 203 immigrants listed above another 87 were identified but there was no indication of their province of origin.

SOURCE: Samuel Fisher, Census of Paterson, New Jersey 1824-1832, MSS, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, New Jersey; U.S. Naturalization Records, Boxes 1-7, 1803-1844, Essex County, New Jersey, Boxes 1-13; 1837-1853, Passaic County, New Jersey, MF, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey.

Familiar with the ideas and concepts underlying republicanism, they rapidly assumed a major role in the political life of the community. In Paterson that political life revolved around the growing estrangement between wage-earners and their employers which resulted from the town's growth as a center of textile and machinery production. Drawing parallels between their historical experiences at home and emerging class antagonisms in the United States, immigrants viewed voting for the Democratic Party, supporting striking mill operatives or encouraging the efforts of those they left behind to secure greater independence from England as part of a common struggle to insure individual freedom and religious liberty on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. This essay will examine how immigrants blended the ideas and values they brought with them from Ireland with indigenous artisan republicanism to help shape the nature of popular political activity in Paterson.

Beginning with Alan Dawleys's and Paul Faler's studies of Lynn, Massachusetts, scholars have consistently linked republicanism with native born artisans, especially for the period before 1860. While this may actually have been the case in Lynn, where the Irish comprised only 12% of the population as late as 1860, it is open to question in such cities as New York or Philadelphia, which had large concentrations of Irish prior to the Famine. Between 1817 and 1830 alone, New York's Irish population increased from more than 12,000 to over 50,000, yet they have remained almost invisible in most major accounts of class development during the period.⁴ Even as historians attempted to recast the image of native-born workers they continued to accept traditional notions about immigrants from Ireland. Sean Wilentz indicated that the majority of Irishmen in New York City did not generally join political or trade union activities initiated by native born journeymen.⁵ According to Wilentz they did, however, participate in other forms of workplace protest that had their roots in archaic, agrarian belief systems. These sets of ideas shared little with the more urbanized, republican notions of skilled American artisans. Unlike their native-born counterparts,

among the more recent Irish and British immigrants, industrial terror, collective bargaining by riot, and the sending of anonymous notes had for decades been standard tactics in times of agrarian and labor unrest. Although they were bereft of any formal society or organization, New York's laborers turned to these tactics with increasing boldness to press wage demands on their employers.⁶

In describing an attack on a weave shop in 1828, Wilentz pointed out that "...the Knox affair (with its similarities to Irish rural violence, the weavers' uprising in eighteenth-century Spitalfields, and other Old World crimes of anonymity) indicates that by the 1820's immigrant workers had successfully imported their own methods of bargaining to New York."⁷ In Wilentz's view the Irish played only a minor role in the growth of republicanism and working class protest in the 1820's and 1830's; it remained largely the preserve of increasingly disaffected American born journeymen.

A similar portrait is drawn of Irishmen in Philadelphia during the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century. Bruce Laurie placed the majority of Irish in the "traditionalist" segment of the city's working class. He argued that the bulk of them were peasants who immigrated directly from the countryside, finding work as casual laborers or as semi- or unskilled hands in Philadelphia's declining industries. Irishmen arrived in the city "...imbued with the gloomy pessimism of the peasantry – rich in folk custom and sorely deficient in the attitudes of productive workers." Although they "...evinced a peculiar form of class consciousness," and often supported the efforts of radical workingmen, they did not play a key role in either the formation of local trades unions or in working class political agitation.⁸

Two other major studies of ante-bellum Irish workers totally ignored questions of political ideology. While Carol Groneman's study of New York's Sixth Ward shattered long held stereotypes about the nature of family life in a post-famine immigrant community, she never followed the implications of her subject into the area of politics or workplace activism. Similarly, Brian Mitchell's recent study of the Lowell "paddy camps," even where it addressed such issues as local support for the Repeal movement in Ireland or opposition to Know-Nothingism, failed to examine the popular ideological roots of that activity. In both cases immigrants played little if any positive role in shaping either the local or the city wide political environment.⁹

The works of Daniel Walkowitz on Troy, New York and of Cynthia Shelton on Manayunk, Pennsylvania contradict the assumption that Irish immigrants to America were either apolitical or pre-political. Irishmen comprised the single, largest group of workers employed in Troy's iron industry. Even in the immediate post-famine era both skilled and unskilled immigrant workers played a key role in the organization of local trades unions, voicing their disagreements with management in a language of protest which mingled elements of their associational experience in Ireland with the republican rhetoric of their new homeland. Shelton found that Irishmen and Englishmen played a key role in the workplace and political mobilization of textile workers in Manayunk in the 1830's. Long experienced with both trade unionism and popular protest, immigrants responded in a directed, rational way to the increasing efforts of millowners to control their lives both on and off the job. Having experienced first hand the

arbitrary misuse of power and authority at home they were determined to prevent the replication of such conditions in the United States.¹⁰

Shelton clearly recognized that the people who emigrated from northern Ireland to such towns as Paterson, Lowell and Manayunk during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries came out of a highly politicized environment. Their reactions to declines in the demand for hand woven cotton and linen cloth, a growing scarcity of land, increasing population or the exercise of more direct political control by England represented a complex mixture of modern political concepts, folk customs, religious beliefs and anti-British sentiments which Oliver MacDonagh has identified as "preservatism." It was the "moral economy of the masses, their concept of the right relations between landlord and tenant, farmer and labourer, producer and consumer, purveyor and customer which they sought to maintain and restore."¹¹ From the marches of the Protestant Volunteers in the 1780's to the failed revolts of 1796 and 1803 to O'Connell's campaign for Catholic Emancipation in the 1820's, the Irish resorted to both legal and illegal means to maintain those "right relations." Some efforts had their roots in futile dreams of returning to a golden age of pre-British Gaelic independence or in bitter Protestant-Catholic sectarianism; others envisioned a united Ireland free of religious strife and gross economic inequality. All of them represented organized movements to alter either their existing relationship with England or Ireland's own social and political structure in order to maintain a valued way of life.¹²

Part of the difficulty in dealing with the political ideology of pre-famine Irishmen is a confusion between goals and methods. Saddled with an intricate web of legal restrictions imposed by the English government, both Catholics and Protestants found it nearly impossible to obtain redress of even the slightest grievances. The absence of a democratic electoral system forced them to resort to various forms of popular politics in order to achieve some measure of social or economic justice. Street marches, rallies, and petition campaigns as well as underground conspiracies and physical intimidation represented the norm in Irish politics. As Tom Garvin observed, "Election day was also a time for carnival; early nineteenth century Irish elections were not particularly democratic events but the point is that they were extremely *popular* events, and they involved a large portion of the population in political life, no matter how marginally."¹³

Much of this activity could be considered pre-political had there not existed an underlying philosophical basis for popular politics in northern Ireland by the late 18th century. Although the historical experiences of Ulster Catholics and Protestants differed greatly, they shared a commitment to such concepts as liberty, freedom and the rights of man, ideas which also lay at the heart of American republicanism. These terms played an increasingly important role in the life of the average Irishman as the forces of change swept across their island in the late 1700's and early 1800's. Political behavior and beliefs in Ulster were greatly affected by the decline of farming and home, handloom weaving around the turn of the century. The development of weave shops and linen factories in the Belfast area in conjunction with the demands of a long term war economy, rapid population growth, and regular crop failures led to the gradual deterioration of Ulster's economy in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Displaced linen weavers

found temporary refuge in the cotton industry which sprang up around Belfast during the same period, but increased English competition soon led to the decline of that trade as well. Its collapse by 1830 coupled with the ongoing contraction of linen manufacturing and a general slide in the price of farm goods did considerable damage to Ireland's frail economy.¹⁴

The people of Ulster responded in a variety of ways to this economic turmoil. Young Episcopalian weavers in County Armagh who could not afford land organized secret societies, such as the Peep O'Day Boys, to harass and physically attack Catholic weavers and tenant farmers. The failure of the Irish government to control the Peep O'Day Boys forced Catholics to establish the Defenders to protect their lives and property. It also convinced many Catholics to struggle more aggressively for basic civil and political rights long denied them by both the Irish and English governments.¹⁵ They shared this goal with the Presbyterians of counties Antrim and Down, in northeast Ulster. Members of a dissenting church, they had long suffered under restrictions similar to those experienced by Catholics. Instead of concerning themselves with competition from local Catholics, Presbyterians turned their attention to their treatment as second class citizens by the Irish government which repeatedly ignored the calls of mid-sized landholders, merchants and textile manufacturers for economic and political reforms to encourage the growth of trade and industry. Increasingly frustrated in their attempts to obtain redress, a group of professional men formed the Society of United Irishmen in 1791.¹⁶

The lawyers, craftsmen and merchants who founded the Society identified more with the democratic republicanism of the American Revolution than with the radicalism of the French Revolution. Unlike the Peep O'Day Boys, they envisioned a movement of all Irishmen committed to seeking basic political rights through a reformation of their own Parliament, a position which attracted large numbers of Catholics, including many members of the Defenders.¹⁷ The growing alliance of United Irishmen and Defenders alarmed Irish officials who encouraged the formation of the Orange Order in 1795. Committed to continued Protestant control of Ulster, the organization drew its strongest support from the same social groups as did the Peep O'Day Boys. Members of the order worked closely with government officials and troops to crush the abortive United Irish revolt in 1798.

The failure of the United Irishmen left Irish political thought fractured along religious lines. Catholics linked such concepts as liberty and equality with the achievement of complete independence from both English and Protestant control. According to Tom Garvin, "In Ireland the ideas spread during this crucial period were those of nationalism, civil rights, egalitarianism and a curious blend of conservative Catholicism and political radicalism."¹⁸ Irish Protestants, including many "Old Light" Presbyterians from rural areas, also spoke of equal rights but in their minds the greatest threat to their freedom came from Catholic efforts to redistribute power in Ireland. Other Presbyterians, especially those identified with "New Light" Presbyterianism, continued to support the idea of one Ireland with equal citizenship for Catholics and Protestants alike. They viewed expanded civil rights for the former in the context of a worldwide movement towards greater political freedom for all men. The diverse views of Presbyterians toward Catholic emancipation formed a major cause of a split that occurred in the Synod of Ulster in 1829.¹⁹

The diversity of Irish popular politics found expression in various sectarian movements. Ribbon Societies, building upon earlier Defender organizations, became the vehicle for Catholic political activity during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Ribbonmen struggled to “*free Ireland, unite all Catholics and liberate our country*.”²⁰ While Ribbon Societies, comprised mainly of farmers, shopkeepers, professionals and artisans, dabbled in plans for a general uprising, they spent most of their time engaged in confrontations with the Orange Order, which viewed itself as the primary defender of Irish Protestantism. The order eschewed an overt political role in favor of an extra-legal program of everyday intimidation of Ulster Catholics. Any act of Catholic self-assertion was seen as an attack on the fundamental rights of Irish Protestants.²¹

Although the long range goals of Irish Catholics and most Irish Protestants were often diametrically opposed, they used similar language and tactics to articulate their political concerns. During an election campaign in Waterford in 1826 Catholic houses “...were hung with green boughs and banners and the Tree of Liberty was planted in some of the streets.” Three years earlier at an Orange festival in Wexford a “...symbolic tree of liberty was burned to celebrate the retaking of that town from the rebels in 1798.”²² By the early 1820’s the symbolism if not the full content of republicanism had permeated Irish political life. Continued religious factionalism and economic strife led Irishmen into interpreting republican thought within the context of their particular ethnic concerns.

Given the broad appeal of such groups as the United Irishmen, the Defenders or the Orange Order, it is more than likely that most immigrants arriving in America in the early years of the nineteenth century came with a predisposition to participate in some form of organizational or political activity. In the aftermath of the 1798 revolt many United Irish leaders fled to America where they played an active role in Jeffersonian politics. Orange societies sprang up in New York and other cities during the early 1800’s while Ribbonmen were prominent in the founding of local Hiberian societies. The first widespread, popular political mobilization of immigrants in towns like Paterson, occurred in the early 1820’s in connection with the acceleration of the campaign for Catholic Emancipation in Ireland.

Spearheaded in Ireland by Daniel O’Connell and other upper class Catholics, the movement hoped to channel the resentment of their co-religionists into legal, constitutional channels, according to Fergus O’Ferrall.

There was a popular awareness of great historical injustice and a vague desire to recover lost rights and privileges stemming from events in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries...Gradually Irish Catholic leaders had learned to define political values, goals and means of achievement, which were appropriate to their position and yet which were sufficiently packed with emotional and practical appeal to gain popular support.²³

O’Connell rejected both the non-sectarian, egalitarianism of the United Irishmen and the revolutionary nationalism of the Ribbon Societies. Through the collection of a Catholic Rent he mobilized the Irish masses to pressure the English Parliament to extend basic political rights to the Catholic elite. Although the campaign offered little direct benefit to farmers, sharecroppers, artisans or shop

keepers they viewed the movement as a means of correcting years of unfair and arbitrary treatment.

The movement had great appeal for most Catholic and some Protestant Irishmen living in the United States. More than eight-five of them organized a branch of the Friends of Ireland and of Civil and Religious Liberty in Paterson in November of 1828 "to assist and co-operate in the exertions now making to obtain an alteration in that system of laws by which the majority of the people of Ireland are now and have been so long oppressed."²⁴ The organization planned to raise funds to support O'Connell's emancipation strategy. Spokesmen for the Friends of Ireland depicted the campaign as part of the ongoing effort to turn back the tide of English tyranny which had begun with the American Revolution. They identified emancipation as the first step in a long range effort to bring the benefits of republican society to all the people of Ireland.

For nearly 700 years, has the British government pursued towards persecuted Ireland, the most barbarous policy that ever disgraced the annals of history...Abominable – nothing but injustice, indignity and persecution have been Erin's lot – though we have seen her gifted sons in every clime the steady champions of freedom; ...and in the righteous cause of American liberty, they were the most unbending and steadfast in the ranks of our patrols...Their [the Irish] struggle for civil and religious liberty, has been and will continue to be arduous, so long as mere right is arrayed against gigantic power; and although opposition will meet them as every step they will transmit the torch of liberty, ...from generation to generation, until the goals of the people's ambition be finally and triumphantly reached.²⁵

While the leadership of the Friends of Ireland doubtlessly identified their struggle with the American Revolution in order to gain support from non-Irishmen, their connecting of the two movements also reflected an attempt to locate emancipation within a broader historical context. By viewing themselves as members of a transatlantic republican community immigrants legitimized their involvement in both Irish and American political issues. The melding force of republicanism in Paterson could be seen at a July 4th celebration in 1826. On one side of a hall there hung a silken flag with the motto "Washington The Saviour of his country" while on another wall a banner proclaimed "Robert Emmett: The dew drops from his country's shamrock are the brightest tributes to his memory." The juxtaposition of Irish and American Republican symbols remained a constant fixture of public celebrations in Paterson throughout much of the early and mid-nineteenth century.²⁶

The ideas which shaped their involvement in the Emancipation campaign had broader implications for some members of the Friends of Ireland. They drew a direct connection between the plight of the Irish and that of Black slaves in America. In March of 1828 ten of them signed a petition calling for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. An additional fifteen immigrants not affiliated with the Friends of Ireland signed the document.²⁷ A number of the petitioners who could not be positively identified may have also been Irishmen as indicated by such names as Hugh McAleen, Pat McRandle, John Donahan, James P. O'Keefe, Alexander Leary and Patrick Blaney. For them as well as for American and English signatories the wording of the petition struck a responsive chord. Its allusion to "...the blessings of liberty..." and "...the great principles of

republicanism and equal rights...,” echoed sentiments expressed by Philadelphia cordwainers, Belfast weavers and Manchester factory operatives.²⁸ Large numbers of people on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean associated such terms as freedom and equality with the protection of both individual and communal rights from the arbitrary misuse of authority by either a hereditary or a self-appointed aristocracy. It is within that context that Irish support for Catholic Emancipation or the abolition of slavery in Washington, D.C. must be viewed. It also lay at the hear of Irish immigrant support for the Democratic Party in Paterson.

Partisan politics in the New Jersey town had long been affected by its role as one of the nation’s earliest centers of textile manufacturing.²⁹ Unlike their counterparts in Lowell and other northern New England mill towns who integrated all aspects of production under one roof, limited financial resources forced Paterson manufacturers to concentrate on the spinning of yarn. Weaving was mainly done on an outwork basis on handlooms in homes or small shops, especially in the early and mid-1820’s. A growing demand for handloom weavers made the New Jersey town a natural destination for migrating Irishmen. While the technology and organization of Paterson’s textile industry closely mirrored that of Ulster’s, it also shared a problem of chronic instability with its Irish counterpart. Ongoing attempts to reduce costs while boosting production led to increased conflict between wage-earners and their employers both in the workplace and in the political arena. The role of Irish immigrants in the conflict was crystalized by two developments in the late 1820’s: the decision of Paterson’s manufacturers to eliminate their dependence on handloom weaving and the election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency in 1828.

As Chart 2 indicates, nearly one third of Paterson’s immigrants with identifiable occupations either operated handlooms in their homes or ran weave shops.

Chart 2
Occupations of Irish Immigrants in Paterson, N.J. 1824-1836

Occupational Category	Catholics		Protestants		Unknown	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Home Weavers	24	28.9	26	32.5	—	—
Weave Shop Owners	6	7.3	4	5.0	—	—
Journeymen Artisans	1	1.2	6	7.5	1	33.3
Machinist/Factory Hands	9	10.8	2	2.5	2	66.7
Laborers	2	2.4	—	—	—	—
Master Artisans/Shopowners ¹	15	18.1	11	13.7	—	—
Major Manufacturers ²	1	1.2	5	6.3	—	—
Commerce/Service	25	30.1	21	26.3	—	—
Professionals	—	—	4	5.0	—	—
Farmers	—	—	1	1.2	—	—
Totals	83	100.0	80	100.0	3	100.0

NOTE: The occupational categories were derived from the Fisher censuses of Paterson and other census data. 1 =Employers of 1-19 hands; 2 =20 or more hands.

SOURCE: Samuel Fisher, Census of Paterson, New Jersey 1824-1832; Fisher, Census of Manufactures, Paterson, New Jersey 1825-1832, MSS, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, New Jersey; *Paterson Intelligencer*, 1825-1836. U.S. Naturalization Records, Boxes 1-7, 1803-1844, Essex County, New Jersey, U.S. Naturalization Records, Boxes 1-13, 1837-1853, Passaic County, New Jersey, MF, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey.

Traditional work practices and the inherent limitations of human powered machinery severely limited the competitive potential of local manufacturers. Attempts to boost production ran into a tradition of organization and independence common to hand weavers in both Ireland and Paterson. Ulster weavers conducted militant, sporadic strikes throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As early as 1816 organized Paterson weavers had complained to textile manufacturers about a lack of employment. By the late 1820's it became clear to Paterson mill and shop owners that the future of their industry lay in the adoption of powerloom weaving which required little strength or skill. As a later local historian observed, the change was made "...so that the Irishmen could be turned out to the farms and let the women do the weaving."³⁰ Between 1827 and 1832 the number of families working looms in their dwellings dropped dramatically while the number of powerlooms in use in factories gradually increased. Of the 240 families engaged in handloom weaving during the 1824 to 1829 period only 113 remained in Paterson by 1832. Nearly one third of known Irish families in the trade left the town.³¹

Not only handloom weavers but factory operatives and skilled craftsmen as well felt the impact of economic and technological change. When employers arbitrarily shifted the lunch hour during the summer of 1828 almost all of the factory hands and many journeymen artisans walked off their jobs in protest. Area newspapers identified immigrant spinners and weavers as the driving force behind the strike. Throughout the period skilled Irish craftsmen such as carpenters William Crossett and George Forsyth, shoemaker Edward Earle and machinist Thomas Forbes played important roles in the activities of their respective craft associations. Many of the women and young people laboring in the mills were themselves immigrants. Journalists quickly turned the strike into a political football claiming either that the strikers were Jackson supporters or that employer support of the pro-tariff Adams administration was somehow to blame for the walkout. Although neither claim was particularly accurate, both reflected the growing linkage in the popular mind of economic and political issues.³²

While many Paterson employers initially supported Jackson, his democratic rhetoric, his ambivalence towards protective tariffs and his subsequent banking policies eventually pushed them into joining first the National Republican and then the Whig Party. By 1834 all but one of the town's mill owners and most of its other manufacturers and large merchants aligned themselves with the largely native-born Whigs.³³ By way of contrast, the Democratic Party increasingly relied on a constituency of both foreign and native-born workingmen, Dutch-American craftsmen and farmers, small shopkeepers and Irish immigrants of all descriptions as indicated by Chart 3.

Chart 3
Membership of the Whig Committee, 1834 & The Democratic Vigilance Committee, 1837
in Paterson, New Jersey by Place of Origin and Religion

Country State Origin	Number		Catholic		Presbyterian (Regular or Reformed)		Dutch Reformed		Other Protestant		Unknown	
	Dem	Whg	Dem	Whg	Dem	Whg	Dem	Whg	Dem	Whg	Dem	Whg
Ireland	26	2	13	—	7	1	—	—	1	1	5	—
England	5	7	—	—	3	5	—	1	2	1	—	—
Scotland	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
New Jersey	14	21	2	—	2	12	6	3	1	2	3	4
New York	8	4	—	—	1	2	3	—	2	2	2	—
Connecticut	2	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2	—
Pennsylvania	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unknown	20	40	—	—	4	9	2	1	1	10	13	24
Totals	76	78	15	0	18	31	11	5	7	18	25	24

NOTE: "Other" Protestant denominations include Episcopalians, Methodists and Baptists.

SOURCE: *Paterson Intelligencer*, August 30, 1834, *New Jersey Eagle*, October 6, 1837; Samuel Fisher, *Census of Paterson, New Jersey, 1824-1832*, MSS, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, New Jersey; U.S. Naturalization Records, Boxes 1-7, 1803-1844, Essex County, New Jersey, Boxes 1-13, 1837-1853, Passaic County, New Jersey, MF, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey; U.S. Census of Population, Passaic County, New Jersey, 1850.

Irishmen, including thirteen former members of the Friends of Ireland, comprised over one-third of the membership of the Democratic Vigilance Committee. Although eight Irish committee members had originally been engaged in handloom weaving only two or three continued to follow that trade by 1837. Overall, party loyalists included three carpenters, ten grocers or drygoods merchants, four lawyers, two machinists, two tailors, a shoemaker, a wheelwright, a printer, a watchmaker and a blacksmith. At least six active Democrats were involved in local labor activities including three leaders of the short-lived Paterson Trades Union founded in 1835. Few if any workers and almost no Irishmen could be found in the ranks of the Paterson Whigs. Only two Irish Protestants were active members of the Whig Committee in 1834. Cotton millowners, machine shop operators or master artisans comprised nearly one-third of the local party leadership. Fourteen merchants, nine professionals and two mill supervisors also aligned themselves with the Whigs. Skilled machinists appear to have been the only major group of wage-earners to have not consistently supported the Democratic Party during the 1830's.³⁴

While some Irish immigrants probably supported Jackson because of his Celtic background most of them rallied around the Democratic Party because it articulated ideas and values similar to those that emigrants brought with them from home. Whether they left Ireland for economic or political reasons Irishmen often found that American notions of democracy and equal rights did not extend to the workplace. By attacking the arbitrary exercise of power by local mill owners or master craftsmen over their employees Democratic politicians succeeded in attracting large numbers of immigrants to their cause. By the mid 1830's the Paterson Irish had not only made the Democratic Party their own but had also begun to assume positions of leadership within the organization. Between 1826 and 1839 at least twenty-seven immigrants served as elected town officials, almost all of them under the Democratic banner. In 1831 alone, Irish immigrants held at least ten of thirty-eight elected town positions. Certain individuals were elected again and again drawing upon a wide base of support that extended beyond the Irish community. Peter Archdeacon of County Kilkenny served as overseer or surveyor of highways every year, except one, from 1829 to 1839. Andrew Gallagher, a shoemaker from County Tyrone, was elected to the constable's job for four successive years beginning in 1828 as was former weaver and grocer Francis Finnegan who immigrated from County Monaghan in 1816.³⁵

Toasts delivered at a January, 1829 dinner in honor of Jackson's election revealed the way immigrants connected developments in the United States with the popular political traditions of their homeland. John Kear observed that Jackson was "A Sprig of the shellaleh, and the root of the hickory." Dennis McKiernan, of County Cavan, linked Americans and Irishmen in common cause to promote freedom around the globe. "The Eagle to watch, and the Harp to tune the nation, till the tree of liberty be planted throughout the world." John Morrow, another Irishman, echoed those sentiments. "The Tree of Liberty, planted by the heroes of '76 – May it be nourished from the pure fountain of Republicanism." William D. Quinn, of County Londonderry, depicted Jackson's ascendancy to the presidency as a victory for freedom over the arbitrary misuse of governmental power. "Our next executive department – From which justice will emanate and

merit be rewarded: May it always consider it to be more honorable to *serve* freemen than *rule* slaves.³⁶

In addition to participating in the Democratic victory celebration, Morrow, McKiernan and the others were all active members of the Friends of Ireland. The words they used to express their admiration for Jackson echoed the statements of emancipation supporters who believed that the freeing of Ireland from British control was directly connected with the continued existence of equality and political democracy in the United States. When the Friends of Ireland talked about giving "...vitality to that tree, whose seeds have been so successfully nurtured in our own proud land-so that its branches may be spread over an unfortunate people..." or about severing "...the chains by which she was bound to the triumphal car of corrupted Britain..." they spoke in a language that was an integral part of the popular thinking of the era.³⁷ The same imagery appeared in the resolutions of the Democratic Vigilance Committee in 1837 when they identified Paterson Whigs as the "...faithful allies of Great Britain and the corrupt tools of the British Bank of Philadelphia."³⁸ It surfaced in electoral campaigns, workplace struggles and national movements for political self-determination. In the mind of an immigrant weaver from County Down, twice displaced by the decline of handloom production, there were connections between British domination of Ireland, the elimination of home weaving in Paterson, the need for workingmen's organizations and support for the local Democratic Party. The admixture of economic, political and nationalist grievances produced a way of looking at the world which was shared by many Irish immigrants in Paterson.

Immigrants exercised their influence in the Democratic Party in two distinct fashions. For the considerable number of Irishmen, especially the shopkeepers, small manufacturers and skilled craftsmen who had arrived in the U.S. by the early 1820's and had acquired citizenship, participation included both voting and running for office.³⁹ The involvement of more recently arrived immigrants revolved around the kinds of popular political activities in which they had participated in Ireland. Disruptions of public meetings, raucous street demonstrations and mass petition campaigns became commonplace in Paterson during the late 1820's and 1830's. Even if they did not always initiate such activities Irishmen apparently participated in them with gusto and enthusiasm, much to the chagrin of their political opponents.

On the night of June 29, 1832, for example, a special town meeting was called to find ways to deal with an impending cholera epidemic. According to reports in the *Intelligencer* an organized clique, comprised primarily of immigrants, came to the meeting with the express purpose of disrupting the proceedings. Their tactics succeeded, forcing the chairman of the gathering, Republican town clerk and future Whig Josiah Crismond, to walk out in disgust. He rescheduled the meeting for the 7th of July. On that night the disrupters, "greatly augmented," attempted to secure a voice vote on a proposed assessment to clean up local streets but their efforts failed. In the ensuing secret ballot vote nearly one third of the protesters proved to be ineligible to vote.⁴⁰

A writer to the newspaper, labelling himself "A Republican," condemned the protesters for their breach of civil etiquette.

...Permit me to suggest to those inhabitants of our town who are not citizens, to behave themselves at our public meetings as guests invited to participate in the liberal provisions which the citizens of this country are at all times ready to make for their convenience and comfort, and nobly to share the burden which circumstances may impose on them, without murmuring or discontent know that they are strangers and have not only been taken on but kindly treated.⁴¹

He believed that the "...free born American had to adopt measures very different in their nature from those anticipated by the founders of the present system of freedom and equality" to "stem the torrent of insult, abuse, outrage, usurpation, which is constantly brought forth by a misled and ungrateful portion of our population." Unnamed individuals blew "...the coals of opposition hotter and hotter." This led people into "...the vulgar error of confounding the idea of order with that of aristocracy."⁴²

The disruptions of the June 29 and July 7 meetings were part of an emerging pattern in the New Jersey manufacturing town. At the annual town meeting in April of 1832 and at a meeting in early June to protest congressional plans to lower tariffs, an organized faction showed up bent on disrupting the proceedings.⁴³ In each case the *Intelligencer* linked the group with the Democratic Party and its cadre of immigrant supporters. A far more serious incident occurred in September of 1833 which clearly demonstrated the links between Irish immigrants, popular political agitation and rising class antagonisms in Paterson. During the summer and early fall an independent "mechanics" political movement developed composed primarily of wage-earners with some support from shopkeepers and professional men. When the local National Republican Party attempted to hold a meeting on September 27, 1833 to select delegates to a county nominating convention a crowd of between 150 and 200 people, "...including a large number of aliens and boys," took over the gathering, forcing party regulars to abandon the room. The rump group formed their own slate of delegates. At the same time, in another part of town, a meeting "...of the inhabitants of Paterson" was in the process of choosing delegations to attend all of the upcoming county conventions. Chaired by two long time Democrats the second meeting officially sanctioned the actions of the rump National Republicans. Both groups supported the candidacy of John K. Flood, son of an Irish immigrant, for the legislature. Of the twenty-one people chosen to attend the various conventions at least eight were Irishmen.⁴⁴

Outraged National Republicans blamed the incident on attempts by local Democrats to gain political leverage by stirring up class tensions. This sentiment was expressed in a letter to the *Intelligencer* by "Jefferson."

And now let me ask, will the National Republican mechanics and working men of Paterson, abandon the principles for which they have long contended, to become the tools of a party devoted to the interests (not of Andrew Jackson but) of Martin Van Buren, a master in the school of intrigue. ...I trust not – I trust that the National Republican mechanics and working men, and every other good member of the party, will stand to their arms, firm and united against the day of strife; that they will not yet sell themselves to the devil of Jacksonianism for the lucre of political or personal emolument. If the interests of the mechanics and working men need a special advocate in the Legislature, let them come forward and select a National Republican candidate from among themselves who knows what they require, and who is more able to procure what they seek, than a person selected from any other class.⁴⁵

Although the exact relationship of the mechanics movement to the Democratic Party remains unclear many of the former's most active members had previously been identified as National Republicans. The presence of both bona fide Republicans and Democrats within the ranks of the mechanics movement indicated that it was not just a front for crafty Jacksonian politicians. In their actions and public statements the mechanics appeared to have been close in spirit to the workingman's movement that had developed in New York City in late 1829 and early 1830. Unlike its New York counterpart, however, the Paterson movement and its successors retained some independence from the formal Democratic Party organization. In the fall of 1835 the Farmers, Mechanics and Working-men of Essex County decided to back the Democrats after the party placed a number of labor leaders on its electoral slate. The following year they ran an independent Workingman's ticket which actually outpolled the Democrats in Paterson. The deterioration of Paterson's economy during the late summer and fall of 1833 in conjunction with the growing political coalescence of its employers acted as an initial catalyst to push many native born and immigrant workers beyond the confines of the two party electoral system.⁴⁶

Irishmen active in the mechanics movement viewed the struggle for local political power in Paterson within the broad context of international republicanism. Their toasts at a July 4th dinner organized by leaders of the movement reflected their particular interpretation of republican ideology. David Reid complimented the Committee of Arrangements by observing that, "By their independent exertions they have taught the freemen of Paterson that Mechanics are competent to attend to the duties of public office," while John D. Keiley noted that, "may the Mechanics of Paterson never want an Orator to celebrate their National Independence, nor a soldier to bleed for its preservation." As on other occasions, they linked democracy in America with struggles for freedom at home or in other parts of the world. Hugh Brady toasted, "The radical reformers of Great Britain and Ireland who are now trying to break the galling yoke of despotism – May the redeemed and independent freemen of America cheer them on." For Edward M'Keon, America served as a model for his own country. "Ireland – The land of an Emmet, a Burke, a Shiel and an O'Connell – May she, like the U.S. overcome her oppressors, and show the world that she is worthy to become a free and independent nation." Charles McGee saw a connection between the plight of the Irish and the Poles. "The unfortunate sons of Poland – May they, in unison with the manacled sons of Erin appeal to the god of justice, (and not in vain) for vengeance on their oppressors." John Steel returned to another common concern of Irish immigrants, personal and religious freedom. "Freedom of opinion, civil and religious, guaranteed by the Constitution – Palsied be the hand that would wrest it from us."⁴⁷

The involvement of both wage-earning and non wage-earning Catholic and Protestant Irishmen in the mechanics movement reflected the depth to which immigrants had internalized such concepts as freedom, equality and justice. In a curious historical twist they utilized traditional political tactics learned in the streets of Belfast, Dublin or Londonderry to gain greater control over a modern electoral process. Although their protests were often boisterous they never reached the levels of violence found in the popular activities of immigrants in

nearby New York City. The discipline evident in direct Irish agitation in Paterson also appeared in their utilization of another familiar tactic, a petition campaign, to lash out at the growing control of chartered corporations over their working lives. The use of petitions to obtain redress of economic or political grievances had a long history on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. It represented a crucial element in the mobilization of rural support for the cause of Catholic Emancipation. In the mid 1820's, for example, over 100,000 inhabitants of Ireland signed a petition calling for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. A considerable number of immigrants in Paterson signed the 1828 petition calling for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.⁴⁸

The 1834 Paterson petition drive spearheaded by James W. King and William Quin, two Reformed Presbyterian Irishmen, and Andrew Mead, publisher of the local Democratic newspaper, asked the New Jersey legislature to turn down a request for incorporation by the Boudinot Manufacturing Company, a cotton textile firm. It was to be headed by Elisha Clark, an active Whig and former partner in the Union Cotton Factory. The anti-incorporation petition, signed by over 350 residents of Paterson, reflected the attitude of many ante-bellum people to special business charters in the wake of Jackson's war on the U.S. Bank.⁴⁹ Such charters created artificial inequality, in their view, by granting special privileges to a small segment of the community. By legally protecting them from personal risk, the incorporation process reduced competition and threatened individual economic independence, a cornerstone of popular republican thought.

...all monopolies by charter are direct and palpable infringements on the true spirit and genius of our free institutions; and the whole system...ought to be abrogated. Your petitioners maintain it a sound republican doctrine, that the representative is bound to obey the expressed will of his constituents; it is therefore just as proper to avow our determination to prevent the extension of this system of state monopoly, by the exertion of all means and influence within our power, and hand down to posterity, unimpaired, those rights and liberties which have been bequeathed to us by the wisdom of sages and the blood of heroes...⁵⁰

Recent electoral and legislative gains by anti-monopoly Democrats indicated that most New Jerseyans disliked state chartered corporations. Granting a charter in this case violated the will of the people, according to the petitioners. "We claim equal rights, equal laws and equal suffrage; for those we have contended and have been victorious both in the field and at the ballot box."⁵¹

The petitioners included people active both in the mechanics movements and in the regular Democratic Party organization. A minimum of sixty-five Irish immigrants signed the petition. At least fifty other petitioners for whom there is no positive identification had Irish surnames. Fifty-two of fifty-three petitioners with documented political ties identified with the Democratic Party. The petition, however, was more than just a vehicle of partisan protest for some of the signatories. It reflected their understanding of such basic concepts as personal liberty and equal rights. Ten of the 1828 Abolition petition signers affixed their names to the circular as did nineteen members of the Friends of Ireland as well as a number of local labor leaders. Thirty-one former handloom weavers who had experienced first hand the impact of the economic decisions made by local millowners backed the effort.⁵²

For many Paterson inhabitants in 1834 the campaign against business incorporations was perceived as part of a broader movement which stretched from the weave shops of Belfast or the farms of Kilkenny to the streets of Paterson. The convergence of this perception with the public rhetoric of the Democratic Party and the mechanics movement as well as with the organizing efforts of the nascent labor movement helped to determine the parameters of immigrant involvement in local politics. When Jacksonian leaders claimed, "That the contest now going on and in which we are called upon to act, is the same that has divided the people of the country since the adoption of our constitution, a contest between the friends of strong government and aristocratic institutions on the one hand and the friends of freedom and equal rights on the other," they spoke in a language already familiar to most Irishmen.⁵³

The inability of Paterson National Republicans/Whigs to disrupt the coalition of immigrants and wage-earners led some of them to turn to nativism as a means of wooing American-born Patersonians away from the Democratic Party. The very existence of an organized movement dedicated to limiting the ability of Irish immigrants to participate in the electoral process represented a clear indication of the latter's impact on Paterson's political life. The immediate impetus for the nativist movement was a bitter six week strike of over two thousand textile workers in the summer of 1835 in which many immigrant women and young people took part.⁵⁴ The strike created sharp divisions in the community as most wage-earners and many shopkeepers and professionals supported the millhands. Newspapers from as far away as Pittsburgh condemned the cotton mill owners while organized workers in New York, Newark, Boston and Philadelphia provided badly needed financial support. Despite the pressure Paterson manufacturers refused to yield, eventually forcing the strikers back to the mills on their terms while blacklisting strike leaders and their families.

Local Irishmen were singled out by the mill owners and their supporters for particular abuse. The *Intelligencer* published a savage attack on both the Paterson Irish and on a leader of the New York Trades Union who spoke at a meeting in support of the millhands. Written in dialect it clearly implied that immigrants had no understanding of the issues involved in the walkout and that they were easily swayed by "...a wonderful display of cabbage oratory."

What's that you're fater saying mister? Is it the wavers mating you mane? Och, by the powers, but we shall 'dress the lads nately; for, d'ye mind, the rascally mill owners would'n trust us for yarn, and that's what it is sure, is the rason why we shall spake fornenst them' ...stand by my lads, while there is pratee in Limerick or a shillelah in Tyrone! – Now I say as how, Jemmy, shillelahs ain't no how kinder arguments to use among our folks. Gramachree! but its the most convanient argument in the world; for if you're not plased wid the discourse, just give the spaker a touch of the cudgel, and sure it will be a rale knock down argument and no grumbling after.⁵⁵

During the course of the walkout a number of local Whigs founded an auxiliary branch of the Native American Democratic Association of New York in their town. They claimed that "...the rapid and unrestrained admission of emigrants from all nations, and of every description of character...without an adequate acquaintance with the nature of our institutions, and with all the prejudices...of

their fatherland still lingering about them...” threatened the very existence of democracy in the United States.⁵⁶ The nativists believed that “foreign combinations” and “foreign influences” infringed upon their rights and threatened the nation’s domestic peace. The three major points of the Native American program, a twenty-one year residency requirement for both citizenship and election to public office and a ban on the immigration of “paupers and criminals,” were directed towards one goal: the elimination of Irish immigrants as a major political force in the community.⁵⁷ This view was clearly spelled out.

We esteem our adopted citizens as much as we do each other, so long as they are citizens; but when they so far forget themselves as to congregate together under their national name, feelings and prejudices, they cease to be citizens of America; and are to all intents and purposes citizens of the nation which gave them birth and under whose banner their feelings at least rally.⁵⁸

Although the Native American Democrats claimed approximately four hundred members in Paterson by December, 1835, the organization met stiff resistance from both individuals and the local Democratic Party. The editor of the *New Jersey Eagle* ridiculed nativist claims of non-partisanship. “We should infer that its real object, notwithstanding the declaration to the contrary, is to promote the cause of the federal (Whig) Party.” A correspondent to the *Paterson Courier* posed a question. “Why was Egypt when it was visited by plagues like the Native American Party in Pater(son)?” “Because it was filled with low curses (locusts).”⁵⁹ “A Naturalized Citizen” wrote a letter to the *Intelligencer* voicing his concern over the nativist program. He believed that a blanket restriction on all immigrants was a grave mistake.

Conscious of possessing feelings as truly American as any of her native citizens—with all my interests, my hopes, my happiness bound up in the welfare of this...with a family of native born children, owning an American woman for their mother – cannot but look with intense interest upon the movements of those who would represent me to my friends, my family, as a suspicious character, as one who cherished feelings and opinions inimical to the welfare of our republican institutions. This is more than flesh and blood can bear without wincing.⁶⁰

An ad-hoc meeting of “democratic-republicans” issued a series of resolutions condemning the nativists. Identifying their opponents “...as a faction of office seekers who are now willing to sacrifice the happiness of society...as a solace for their disappointed ambition,” the anti-nativists charged that limiting access to citizenship would turn the United States into “...the seat of oppression” rather than “...an asylum for the oppressed.” Delegates to a county Democratic Party meeting in 1835 expressed similar sentiments. Widespread opposition led to the demise of the movement by early 1836. Its attempts to turn anti-Irish sentiment into political capital failed; only one nativist leader was elected to office at the 1836 town meeting. By way of contrast four of five candidates active in the anti-nativist movement were elected.⁶¹

The failure of the nativists to dilute the political influence of the Paterson Irish indicated that, unlike the immigrants of Wilentz’s New York or of Laurie’s Philadelphia, Irishmen living in New Jersey’s primary manufacturing town played

a pivotal role in local politics. Their participation was rooted in a set of values and beliefs that blended neatly with indigenous republicanism. Whether immigrant or native born, the craftsmen, farmers, labourers and shopkeepers who became the foot soldiers of Jacksonian democracy in Paterson shared similar concerns over the arbitrary exercise of power on the part of an expanding merchant and manufacturing elite. The growth of trades unions and popular support for the Democratic Party or for an independent workingman's movement had their origin in that very concern. Utilizing both the ballot box and direct political action the Irish attempted to define a secure role for themselves in a rapidly changing society.

A key issue remains. How unique were the experiences of the Paterson Irish? Shelton in her study of Manayunk textile workers has already challenged Wilentz's formulation of native-born artisan republicanism as the well spring of antebellum working class ideology.⁶² She places both Irish and English immigrants on an equal plane with their American counterparts in terms of providing leadership to the forces of popular democracy during the period. One major factor contributing to immigrant labor activism in Paterson and Manayunk may have been the nature of local industry itself, a factor that also helped to account for the militancy of immigrants ironworkers in Troy, New York.⁶³ Small spinning mills and handloom weaving in Paterson and Manayunk attracted large numbers of immigrants to both regions. Increasing mechanization and centralization of textile production in the 1820's and 1830's represented as great a threat to immigrant workers as did metropolitan industrialization to their native born counterparts in New York City.

Another major problem is that both Laurie and Wilentz failed to delve beyond the surface of the Irish immigrant experience in America. They assumed that most Irishmen were peasants lacking in modern workplace and political skills. Their analysis supported the view that Irish participation in politics or strikes was completely visceral with little if any identifiable philosophical content. As recent research on Ireland has demonstrated, even cottiers or small tenant farmers in the most remote sections of the country operated on the basis of an internally consistent, if rough, ideology, when involving themselves in protests directed at landlords or government officials. Elements of republican thought, filtered through the lens of traditional agricultural experiences and beliefs, could be found in their testimony, broadsides and public pronouncements. Their ability to maintain a relatively stable family life in the Lowell "paddy camps" or in New York's Five Points provides further evidence of the cohesiveness and durability of the values they brought with them from home. There is little reason to assume that such belief systems did not carry over into their political or workplace activities as well.⁶⁴

An analysis of immigrant behavior in Paterson strengthens a richer, more complex view of the roots of Irish participation in American society during the 1820's and 1830's. Their involvement in politics or workplace protest grew out of a rational world view which placed a high value on personal liberty and freedom. Turn-outs, voting, street demonstrations, and petition campaigns represented tried and true means of achieving clearly defined goals. Irishmen, in conjunction with their English-born and native-born counterparts, played an active and

decisive role in shaping the foundations of both workplace organization and political mobilization in the New Jersey factory town. If future research shows that similar developments occurred in other communities it will force a change in our basic understanding of the early evolution of the American working class. Not only the native born carpenter from New York or the British machinist from Manchester but the Irish weaver from County Antrim will be recognized as one of the prime movers behind the struggle to maintain and expand the parameters of popular democracy in the U.S. during the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century.

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ENDNOTES

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1. Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York, 1984). Building upon the work of Paul Faler, Alan Dawley and Howard Rock among others, Wilentz presented the most comprehensive exposition of the evolution of working class republicanism during the Jacksonian era. See also Amy Bridges, "Becoming American: The Working Classes in the United States before the Civil War," in Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg, eds., *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States* (Princeton, 1986), 157-96. For a good summary of the literature on republicanism and the early American working class see John Jentz, "Industrialization and Class Formation in Antebellum America: A Review of Recent Case Studies," *Amerikastudien*, 30, 303-25.

2. For continuity in the political beliefs of immigrants see Richard Twomey, "Jacobins and Jeffersonians: Anglo-American Radicalism in the United States, 1790-1820" (Ph.D. diss., Northern Illinois University, 1974); Michael Durey, "Tom Paine's Apostles: Radical Emigres and the Triumph of Jeffersonian Republicanism," *William and Mary Quarterly* XLIV, No. 4, (1987): 661-88; Margaret Jacob and James B. Jacob, eds., *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London, 1984); John Cumbler, "Migration, Class Formation and Class Consciousness," in Michael Hanagan and Charles Stephenson, eds., *Confrontation, Class Consciousness, and the Labor Process - Studies in Proleterian Class Formation* (New York, Westport, 1986) 51-4; Tom Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics* (New York, 1981), 37-8; For a similar pattern in England see Lynn Hollen Lees, *Exiles of Erin - Irish Migrants in Victorian London* (Ithaca, 1979), 22-25.

3. Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants - A Study in Acculturation*, rev. ed. (New York, 1971), 125-50; Kirby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York, 1985). Miller's book is the key work on Irish immigration although it updates rather than revises Handlin's interpretation; Dale T. Knobel, *Paddy and the Republic: Ethnicity and Nationality in Antebellum America* (Middletown, 1985). For a more positive view of the experiences of Irish immigrants, especially wage earners see Robert Sean Wilentz, "Industrializing America and the Irish: Towards a New Departure," *Labor History* 20 (1979): 579-95; Cumbler, "Migration, Class Formation and Class Consciousness," 39-64; One estimate places the number of Irish immigrants to the United States between 1815 and 1845 at approximately 850,000. David Doyle, *Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America 1760-1820* (Dublin and Cork, 1981), 51-2.

4. Alan Dawley, *Class and Community – The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge, 1976); Paul Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial Revolution, Lynn, Massachusetts, 1780-1860* (Albany, 1981) 144-45. Out of a total population of 19,083 in 1860 there were 2,284 Irish immigrants in Lynn. For New York see Doyle, *Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America*, 209.
5. Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 61-103.
6. Wilentz, 168-69. Immigrant participation in antebellum labor violence is highlighted in David Grimsted, "Ante-bellum Labor: Violence, Strike and Communal Arbitration," *Journal of Social History* 19, No. 1 (1985); 5-28.
7. Wilentz, 170. Irish participation in street violence, in a somewhat later period, is also the theme of Elliot J. Gorn, "'Good-Bye Boys, I Die a True American': Homicide, Nativism, and Working-Class Culture in Antebellum New York City," *Journal of American History* 74, No. 2 (1987); 388-410. For information on the Knox affair and on popular protest in New York see Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy – Popular Disorder in New York City 1763-1834* (Chapel Hill, 1987), 175-76.
8. Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1980), 56, 66.
9. Carol Groneman Pernicone, "The 'Bloody Ould Sixth': A Social Analysis of a New York City Working Class Community in the Mid Nineteenth Century," (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1973); Brian C. Mitchell, *The Paddy Camps - The Irish of Lowell 1821-1861* (Urbana and Chicago, 1988).
10. Daniel J. Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town - Iron and Cotton-Worker Protest in Troy and Cohoes, New York, 1855-84* (Urbana and Chicago, 1981) 29-47; Cynthia Shelton, *The Mills of Manayunk - Industrialization and Social Conflict in the Philadelphia Region, 1787-1837* (Baltimore, 1986).
11. Oliver MacDonagh, *States of Mind - A Study of Anglo-Irish Conflict 1780-1980* (London, 1983), 40.
12. The best account of Ireland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in relation to immigration is Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*; See also W.F. Adams, *Ireland and the Irish Emigration to the New World From 1815 to the Famine* (New Haven, 1932), 58. A good, one volume summary of Irish history during the period is Gearoid O. Tuathaigh, *Ireland Before the Famine* (Dublin, 1972).
13. Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics*, 46.
14. Conrad Gill, *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry* (London, 1925), 152, 279, 322.
15. David W. Miller, *Queen's Rebels - Ulster Loyalism in Historical Perspective* (Dublin, 1978), 53.
16. Peter Gibbon, "The Origins of the Orange Order and the United Irishmen – A Study in the Sociology of Revolution and Counter-Revolution," *Economy and Society* 1, No. 2 (May, 1972): 150-51. Antrim and Down Presbyterians demonstrated little overt hostility to Catholics who comprised approximately 50% of the population. In contrast, Catholics in nearby Armagh outnumbered Protestants nearly three to one.
17. Marianne Elliot, *Partners in Revolution – The United Irishmen and France* (New Haven, 1982), 212-213; See also Garvin, *The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics*, 7-31. Catholics comprised nearly half of the membership of the United Irishmen in many sections of Ulster.
18. Garvin, 44.
19. Fergus O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation – Daniel O'Connell and the Birth of Irish Democracy 1820-1830* (Dublin, 1985), 169, 206. He estimates that 1,400 of the 14,000 members of the Catholic Association were Protestants.

20. Garvin, 42. See also Tom Garvin, "Defenders, Ribbonmen and Others: Underground Political Networks in Pre-Famine Ireland," *Past and Present* 96 (August, 1982): 132-155; M.R. Beames, "The Ribbon Societies: Lower-Class Nationalism in Pre-Famine Ireland," *Past and Present* 97 (1982): 128-143; Joseph Lee, "The Ribbonmen" in T.D. Williams, ed., *Secret Societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), 26-35.
21. David W. Miller, *Queen's Rebels*, 85; See also D. Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland 1800-1870* (Dublin, 1978) and Peter Gibbon, *The Origins of Ulster Unionism* (Manchester, 1975), 26-36.
22. O'Ferrall, 132; James S. Donnelly Jr., "Pastorini and Captain Rock: Millenarianism and Sectarianism in the Rockite Movement of 1821-24" in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly Jr., *Irish Peasants, Violence and Political Unrest 1780-1914* (Madison, 1983), 128.
23. O'Ferrall, 27-28.
24. *Paterson Intelligencer*, January 14, 1829; T.F. Moriarity, "The Irish-American Response to Catholic Emancipation," *Catholic History Review* 66 (1980): 353-73; The organization's membership was compiled from articles and notices published in the *Intelligencer* between January 7 and February 25, 1829; Samuel Fisher, *Census of Paterson, New Jersey 1824-1832*, MSS, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, New Jersey; U.S. Naturalization Records, Boxes 1-7, 1803-1844, Essex County, New Jersey, Boxes 1-13, 1837-1853, Passaic County, New Jersey, MF, New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey.
25. *Intelligencer*, February 25, 1829.
26. *Intelligencer*, July 6, 1826.
27. Memorial from Paterson in New Jersey – Praying the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia, March 24, 1828, Library of Congress Collection of House of Representatives Documents, HR 20A-65.1, Box #247, Bundle labelled January 9 - May 12, 1828, 20th Congress, 1827-1829; Fisher, *Census of Paterson, 1827, 1829*; U.S. Naturalization Records, 1803-1844, 1837-1853.
28. Memorial from Paterson, 1828; Irish hostility to Blacks is one of those historical givens that is rarely ever questioned. This theme is present in J. Runcie, "Hunting the Nigs in Philadelphia: The Race Riot of 1834," *Pennsylvania History* 39 (1972): 187-218; W.B. Sharron, "John Hughes and a Catholic Response to Slavery in Antebellum America," *Journal of Negro History* 57 (1972): 254-60; D.C. Raich, "Daniel O'Connell and American Anti-Slavery," *Irish Historical Studies* 30 (1976): 3-25; Leon Litwack, *North of Slavery* (Chicago, 1971), 162-66; Gilbert Osofsky, "Abolitionists, Irish Immigrants and the Dilemmas of Romantic Nationalism," *American Historical Review* 80 (1975): 889-912. One element lacking in Paterson was direct competition for jobs. In 1829, for example, Blacks comprised 3.2% of the town's population. A total of thirty-six adult males lived in free black households. They posed little threat to recently arrived immigrants.
29. Howard Harris, "The Transformation of Ideology in the Early Industrial Revolution: Paterson, New Jersey 1820-1840," (Ph.D. diss, City University of New York 1985).
30. William Nelson, "Interview with John Colt," August 8, 1873, William Nelson Papers, MS Group 23, New Jersey Historical Society, Newark, New Jersey.
31. Samuel Fisher, *Census of Manufactures, Paterson, New Jersey, 1825-1832*, MSS, Paterson Free Public Library, Paterson, New Jersey; Fisher, *Census of Paterson, 1824-1832*; U.S. Naturalization Records, Essex County, 1803-1844, Passaic County, 1837-1853. The number of families working looms in their homes went from 140 to 23. Between 1825 and 1838 the number of powerlooms in the mills increased from 249 to 442. Nineteen of 63 identified immigrant families in the trade left town.
32. *New York Commercial Advertiser*, July 31, 1828; *New York Evening Post*, July 30, 1828.
33. *Intelligencer*, August 30, 1834.

34. *New Jersey Eagle*, October 6, 1837; Fisher, Census of Paterson, 1824-1832; U.S. Naturalization Records, 1803-1844, 1837-1853; U.S. Census of Population, Passaic County, New Jersey, 1850.
35. *Intelligencer*, 1825-1839; Fisher, Census of Paterson, 1824-1832; Naturalization Records 1803-1844, 1837-1853; Elections for local offices were conducted at the annual town meeting which was held in April. The newspaper published the list of winning candidates the week after the election.
36. *Intelligencer*, January 14, 1829.
37. *Intelligencer*, February 11, 1829.
38. *New Jersey Eagle*, October 6, 1837.
39. Fisher, Census of Paterson, 1824-1832; U.S. Naturalization records, 1803-1844, 1837-1853; U.S. Census of Population, Passaic County, New Jersey, 1850. At least 109 Irishmen living in Paterson during the period had arrived in the U.S. before 1826, many of them travelling straight to the town upon their arrival in America.
40. *Intelligencer*, July 11, 1832. There were three basic requirements for voting in local elections: six month residence in Paterson prior to election day plus payment of some form of local tax, the person had to be a freeholder or he had to have rented a tenement with a monthly value of \$5.00 for at least one year.
41. *Intelligencer*, July 4, 1832.
42. *Intelligencer*, July 4, 1832.
43. *Intelligencer*, April 18, 1832, June 6, 1832.
44. *Intelligencer*, September 18, 1833, October 9, 1833. In addition to the eight Irishmen at least two of the men were English. There were no immigrants found in the ranks of the regular National Republican leaders.
45. *Intelligencer*, October 2, 1833.
46. Wilentz, 172-216; See also Walter E. Hugins, *Jacksonian Democracy and the Working Class: A Study of the New York Workingmen's Movement 1829-1837* (Stanford, 1960) and Edward Pessen, *Most Uncommon Jacksonians: Radical Leaders of the Early Labor Movement* (Albany, 1967); *Paterson Courier*, September 23, 30, 1835; *New Jersey Eagle*, September 26, 1835, September 16, 1836, October 11, 18, 1836; *Intelligencer*, October 17, 15, 1835.
47. *Intelligencer*, July 17, 1833.
48. Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy*, 138-42; O'Ferrall, 182.
49. *Intelligencer*, February 4, 1835, July 16, 1828, On general public reaction to business incorporations in New Jersey and its relationship to divisions within the Democratic Party see Herbert Ershkowitz, *The Origin of the Whig and Democratic Parties – New Jersey Politics, 1820-1837* (Washington, D.C., 1982), 177-206.
50. *Intelligencer*, February 4, 1835.
51. *Intelligencer*, February 4, 1835. Clark's original cotton mill failed in November of 1834. The proposed incorporated venture would have allowed him to return to manufacturing without assuming any personal risk. The firm eventually got its charter and was employing fifty-nine hands by March of 1838. It continued in operation for many years.
52. *Intelligencer*, February 4, 1835.

53. *New Jersey Eagle*, October 6, 1837.
54. Harris, 283-305.
55. *Intelligencer*, August 12, 1835.
56. *Intelligencer*, September 9, 1835.
57. *Intelligencer*, September 9, 1835.
58. *Intelligencer*, August 26, 1835.
59. *New Jersey Eagle*, September 4, 1835; *Courier*, September 23, 1835. Of the thirteen individuals active in the founding of the Native American Association with known political ties, ten had consistently been involved with the National Republican or Whig parties. The other three had originally been Democrats but had switched to the Whig Party.
60. *Intelligencer*, August 26, 1835.
61. *Intelligencer*, September 9, 1835; William Nelson, ed., *Records of the Township of Paterson, New Jersey, 1831-1851: With the Laws Relating to the Township: Extracts From Contemporary Newspapers and Notes* (Paterson, 1895), 36-38.
62. Shelton, *The Mills of Manayunk*, 1-4, 134-73. For a perspective on the role of immigrants in antebellum urban politics see Amy Bridges, *A City in the Republic – Antebellum New York and the Origins of Machine Politics* (New York, 1984). 21-29, 120-23.
63. Walkowitz, *Worker City, Company Town*, 143-80.
64. S.J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845* (Dublin, 1982); Michael Beames, *Peasants and Power: The Whiteboy Movements and Their Control in Pre-Famine Ireland* (New York, 1983); T.N. Brown, "Nationalism and the Irish Peasant 1800-1840," *Review of Politics* 15 (1953): 403-45; Fergus O'Ferrall, "The Growth of Political Consciousness in Ireland 1824-1848," *Irish Economic and Social History* 6 (1979); James W. O'Neill, "A Look at Captain Rock: Agrarian Rebellion in Ireland 1815-1845," *Eire-Ireland* 17 (1982): 17-34; Groneman Pernicone, "The 'Bloody Ould Sixth'," 53-89; Mitchell, *The Paddy Camps*, 154-55.